

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting of January 16, 2013

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Nichols at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 16, 2013, in the City Council Chambers, 25541 Barton Road, Loma Linda, California.

Commissioners Present:

John Nichols, Chairman (arrived at 7:07 p.m.)
Miguel Rojas, Vice Chairman
Carolyn Palmieri
Nikan Khatibi
Fred Khosrowabadi

Staff Present:

Konrad Bolowich, Assistant City Manager
Guillermo Arreola, Associate Planner
Richard Holdaway, City Attorney

Vice Chairman Rojas led the Pledge of Allegiance. No items were added or deleted; no public participation comments were offered upon invitation.

PC-13-01 – MASTER SIGN PROGRAM NO. MS 12-044 – (PUBLIC HEARING – LIMITED TO 30 MINUTES) – The applicant requests approval of a Master Sign Program for the Center Point commercial center located at the southeast corner of Barton Road and Mountain View Avenue. The sign program is site specific to the project and contains criteria for exterior signage.

Planner Arreola presented his report into evidence, indicating that the Master Sign Plan outlines the location of wall signage, monument signs and free standing center identification signs. He pointed out two issues with the proposed McDonalds wall signs: 1) in order to comply with their own sign program, their logo has to be 39.5 inches maximum, the sign plan proposes 42 inches, so the height will have to be reduced by 2.5 inches and be made a condition of approval should the Planning Commission approve the Master Sign Plan. 2) McDonalds is not a corner pad and therefore allowed only one (1) wall sign, however the proposed sign plan indicates signs along the west and south elevations. A condition of approval has been included requiring removal of the extra signs off the west and south elevations of the McDonalds building. The Chase Bank building is allowed four (4) wall signs as it is a corner pad with frontage on Barton Road and Mt. View Avenue. Directional signs are allowed for both pads, with the maximum height of three (3) feet. He indicated that staff recommends approval subject to the conditions of approval, including removal of logos along the west and south elevations of the restaurant pad building and the maximum height of the Chase Bank directional signs limited to three (3) feet. He indicated that the applicant was present to answer any concerns or address any concerns.

Commissioners concerns included:

- The approved color pallet and design of the center and the colors of the McDonalds building appear radically different from the rest of the center, including the yellow canopies. The drawings provided to the Commissioners show a marked departure from the color pallet of the rest of the center.
- Any indication as to a major tenant may affect signage as it pertains to color scheme of the center with the branding of the different stores as with the McDonalds building.
- How close to the street are the monument signs.

Planner Arreola responded that he was not aware of any major tenant signing at this point; that any tenant would have to comply with the master sign program – channel letter design, the maximum sign area, maximum sign length, maximum copy height and maximum logo height. As for the McDonalds, the canopies were included in the conditional use permit. The monument signs are as close to the property line as possible.

Assistant City Manager Bolowich also indicated that the McDonalds building color and stone do match the rest of the center. The building colors in the copies most likely did not reproduce true to color or were left off to focus on the signs. McDonald's logo lettering is white with the yellow logo.

Chairman Nichols inquired that with respect to blending the color pallet of the buildings with the sign program, what prerogative the Commission had to alter the brand of the companies to conform to a color pallet as opposed to a strict adherence to their individual brand color pallet.

City Attorney responded that the Commission is limited to addressing sign issues; the color pallets for the building cannot be changed at this stage. In considering the color pallet for the signs, background and supporting structure consistency with the rest of the development is within the Commission's reasonable discretion; logos, branding and trademarks are issues in which the Commission would not address every specific color detail as they follow a standard format. If a particular tenant coming in has a national branding and logo, prohibiting use of that for whatever reason may or may not be within the Commission's reasonable discretion, however, addressing specific issues of consistency may be within the Commission's discretion. Focus is on the overall sign and the more narrow that becomes, care should be taken in the exercise of that discretion.

Chairman Nichols opened the public hearing and invited comments from the audience.

Applicant Robert Stewart addressed the Commission and clarified that while the parent copies may be true to color, once transmitted and printed, colors can vary. The color scheme of the restaurant and bank buildings is consistent with the color board and stone samples presented previously. The colors and stone veneer finishes on the monument and freestanding signs are all consistent with the color scheme of the entire center.

Chairman Nichols asked as to the amount of latitude given McDonalds with respect to their branding.

Stewart responded that McDonalds worked to create their signs to be consistent with the rest of the center. It was their desire to include the signage on the west and rear elevations in order to orient customers once in the center to more clearly identify their building. It is the objective of the proposed master sign program that the signs have continuity but not necessarily identical size lettering and allow each tenant the ability to have a logo as society identifies with logos. Mr. Stewart indicated that he was ok with the conditions of approval recommended by staff. He also pointed out that there is not a sign on the corner; there is the pedestrian plaza at the corner with the monument signage at the driveway entrances, away from the corner.

Dick Wiley, Loma Linda, addressed the Commission pointing out the possible benefits of using neon in the signs.

Chairman Nichols closed the public hearing.

In response to further questions from the Commissioners regarding changes after approval, Planner Arreola indicated that changes to the approved sign heights, number of signs, etc. would require the applicant to modify the master sign program and come back before the Planning Commission.

Motion by Khatibi, seconded by Khosrowabadi and unanimously carried to approve Master Sign Program No. MS 12-044, subject to the conditions of approval as amended.

PC-13-02 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 7, 2012

Motion by Khatibi, seconded by Palmieri and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2012 as presented.

REPORTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Nichols commented on the LLUMC campus expansion project and the Healthy Cities workshop in December. Andrejs Galenieks, an Intern working with the City on the Healthy Cities concept has an architecture background and prepared some conceptual sketches of what a town center along Anderson and Prospect could be for the city and in conjunction with the campus expansion, with a more pedestrian friendly, landscaped Anderson Street, student housing, retail, etc. In addition, he had met with city staff and LLUMC administration staff and they appear to be open to a collaborative process with the City toward the conceptualization of this town center concept and land use elements. He indicated that there was another workshop proposed in March and encouraged the other Commissioners to attend. He asked about the possibility of the town center conceptual sketches being available at the next Planning Commission meeting.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

Assistant City Manager Bolowich indicated that he would have the town center conceptual sketches available at the next meeting; and agreed that working with LLUMC has been mutually beneficial.

In addition, he is attempting to acquire some exterior renderings of the proposed VA building on Redlands Boulevard to share with the Commission at the next meeting and perhaps schedule a workshop/study session to share the Commissions input with the VA and their architects. The building will be 3 stories, plus the penthouse with 275,000 sq. ft. of usable space and about 320,000 sq. ft. net. The existing property owner is Lewis Homes and as part of this process there will be a general plan amendment, zone change for that particular piece of property taking it out of Area D, redistributing some of the allocations for housing and open space, a PPD and the design of the building, probably within the next 14 months.

Dick Wiley addressed the Commission regarding the proposed VA building and perhaps a mission style concept.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Minutes approved at the meeting of March 6, 2013.



Barbara Nicholson
Deputy City Clerk